

## This Month:

Pearl Harbor Day, 75 years  
 Rare Birds in the Valley  
 24<sup>th</sup> Winter Texan Expo  
 Ben Dover on Christmas  
 Veterans Day Pot Luck  
 Paws for Vets  
 Jeepers Food Drive  
 The Heavens Declare His Glory  
 GE Aviation United Way Campaign

IN PRINT, ON-LINE & ON FACEBOOK

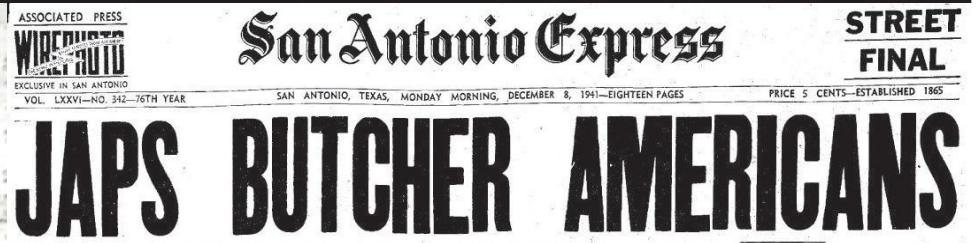
# The Valley Spotlight

**FREE  
TAKE ME HOME**

December 2016

*The Little Paper You'll Want To Keep & Share*

Vol. 3 No. 7



**Hundreds Believed Killed  
When Waves of Dive Bombers  
Swoop Down Upon Hawaii**

Not many are still alive who can remember reading these headlines and hearing on the radio of the surprise military strike by the Imperial Japanese Navy against the United States naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii Territory, on the morning of December 7, 1941. Nevertheless, none of us alive today can forget the impact that this atrocious act of war had on the American way of life, nor should we!

Every year on December 7th we honor the 2,403 Americans killed and 1,178 others who were wounded by observing Pearl Harbor Day. Take a moment to reflect on the memory of these and all veterans who have died or received wounds while serving to protect the freedoms we hold dear.

*Every chance you get, tell a veteran how much you appreciate them!*

## A Look At December Through The Eyes Of History

While the attack on Pearl Harbor is likely the most remembered historical account in December, there are many other events which bear noting. It was on December 25, 1776 that George Washington took 2,400 of his men across the Delaware River on a surprise raid



against 1,500 British-Hessians (German mercenaries) at Trenton, New Jersey. The resulting American victory provided a much needed boost to troop morale in our battle to gain our independence from Great Britain.

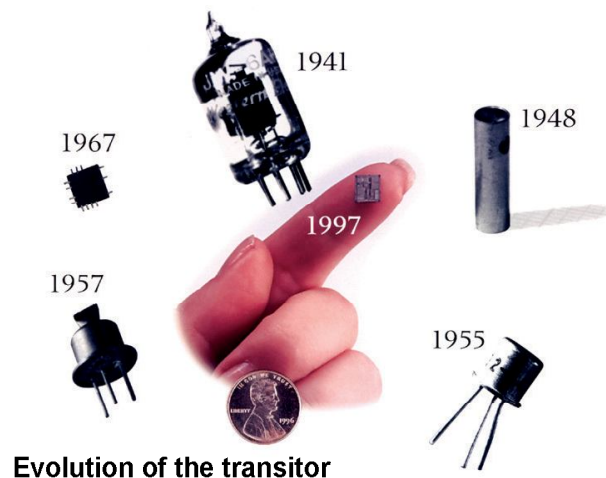
On December 30, 1803, the Stars and Stripes flag was raised over New Orleans as the United States took formal possession of the territory of Louisiana, purchased from France for approximately \$15 million, around a quarter of a billion in 2016 dollars.

South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union on December 20, 1860, leading to the American Civil War. After the wars end, President Andrew Johnson granted general amnesty to all those involved in the Civil War on December 25, 1868.

On December 8, 1941, just one day after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States and Britain declared war on Japan. This was followed on December 11 by Italy and Germany, both declaring war on the United States. The U.S. Congress immediately declared war on them.

On December 13, 1991, North & South Korea signed a treaty of reconciliation and non-aggression formally ending the Korean War, although actual fighting had ceased in 1953.

The first transatlantic radio signal was transmitted by Guglielmo Marconi from Cornwall, England, to St. John's, Newfoundland on December 11, 1901. Forty-Six years later, on December 23, 1947, the transistor was invented at Bell Laboratories by John Bardeen, Walter Brattain and William Shockley, who shared the Nobel Prize for their invention which sparked a worldwide revolution in electronics.



Evolution of the transistor

The House of Representatives impeached President Bill Clinton on December 19, 1998, approving two out of four Articles of Impeachment, charging Clinton with lying under oath to a federal grand jury and obstructing justice. President Clinton was not removed from office, as he was later acquitted by the Senate.



John Lennon was assassinated in New York City on December 8, 1980.

American big-band leader Glenn Miller disappeared in a small plane over the English Channel and was presumably killed on December 16, 1944.

It was on December 16, 1773 that the Boston Tea Party occurred as colonial activists disguised as Mohawk Indians boarded British ships anchored in Boston Harbor and dumped 342 containers of expensive tea into the water.

The Bill of Rights, the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution, became effective following ratification on December 15, 1791.

Almost one hundred years later, Tatanka-yatanka was killed in a skirmish with U.S. soldiers along the Grand River in South Dakota as his warriors tried to prevent his arrest on December 15, 1890. You will recognize him as Sioux Chief Sitting Bull.

On December 17, 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright achieved the first powered, controlled airplane flights near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. On December 1, 1941, The American Civil Air Patrol (CAP), a U.S. Air Force auxiliary, was founded. The CAP currently provides aerospace education, a CAP cadet program, and emergency services such as locating missing aircraft. The Mariner II space probe sent back information from the planet Venus on December 14, 1962. This was the first information ever received from another planet. Then on December 23, 1987, Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager set a new world record of 216 hours of continuous flight around the world without refueling. Their aircraft Voyager traveled 24,986 miles at a speed of about 115 miles per hour.

Abolitionist leader John Brown was executed for treason at Charles Town, West Virginia on December 2, 1859. Slavery was abolished on December 6, 1865 with the ratification of the 13th Amendment. Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to move to the back of a municipal bus on December 1, 1955. The resulting Montgomery bus boycott ended after the U.S. Supreme Court ruling integrating the Montgomery bus system was implemented on December 20, 1956.



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			9	1	3		6	8
		3					1	7
6	1		7					
	4			2	1	7		
9		5						1
8	2		6	7		3		5
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Sudoku No.: 19855

				2	8	9		
	6				3			2
		1	6	9	5		4	8
		4						9
1		6			7			
7	3					1		5
		3			6	2		1
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4		5	3			6		

Sudoku No.: 31031

			3	9				
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4							7	2
	8		9	1				
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						6		
2	9					4	6	
							2	
			7	3			5	1

Sudoku No.: 67343

Fill in each square with one digit, using only the numbers one through nine | Numbers cannot repeat within an individual box of nine squares  
Numbers cannot repeat down a column | Numbers cannot repeat across a row

December 13 is National Ice Cream Day



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**On December 15, 1791, The Bill of Rights  
added 10 Amendments to the US Constitution  
Guaranteeing American Citizens ...**

Freedom of speech, press and religion

The right to bear arms

Protection of homeowners from quartering troops, except during war

Rights and protections against unreasonable search and seizure

Rights of due process of law, protection against  
double jeopardy, self incrimination

Rights of a speedy trial by jury of peers and rights of accused

Rights to trial by jury in civil cases

Protection from cruel and unusual punishment, excessive bail

Protection of rights not specified in the Bill of Rights

States rights, power of the states

# True Tales of a Valley Birder

by Keith Hackland (alamoinn@aol.com)

## Rare Bird News

What rare birds are around? Where can we find them? Generally that is the first question we hear from birders visiting the Valley. After that subject has been exhausted the next subject is "Any good restaurants in the area?" So we hand out a list of our favorite restaurants to our guests.

Back to birds ... it is a safe assumption that some rarities are around, because the Valley is a top spot in the nation for rarities to show up. The first concern is whether a rare bird has been discovered. Next question is whether it has been reported.

There are many ways to broadcast the news of rarities, and most of these are open forums accessible to anyone interested. Nationally there is the North American Rare Bird Alert, and for \$50 per year subscribers receive alerts on rare birds anywhere in the nation, delivered to their email.

**Blog: rgybirds**

In Texas, we have several regional rare bird alerts (rba), and in particular for the Valley, our rba goes back decades. It used to be a recorded telephone voice mail message for birders to call and listen in on. The message was updated when new birds showed up, and birders could leave messages regarding their noteworthy sightings.

Today the Valley's rare bird alerts are online at rgybirds.blogspot.com, a site maintained by Mary Gustafson as a service to birders.

**Forum: texbirds**

A valuable forum with a history of decades is texbirds. This forum is currently found at www.surfbirds.com/birdingmail/Group/Texas\_Birds

The simplest way to locate it is to google texbirds. The forum has typically about 2,500 subscribers and it operates as a posting forum about Texas bird sightings. Posts may be information (such as a list of birds and notes from a birding outing or trip) or questions, and are frequently answered and amplified by other subscribers. Anyone can subscribe, providing they follow the rules of the forum. Anyone can read the posts. Often posts refer to blogs or photo websites where one can find more detail. Texbirds is archived and provides useful historical information for birders and researchers.

**Facebook: Rio Grande Valley Birds**

This entertaining face book forum, with contributions from many Valley birders, provides a mixture of photos and information. It is easy viewing and generally provides up to date reports on rare birds. It has a mixture of experienced and new birders, and can be entertaining with the usual range of comments encountered on face book. There is a trade out compared to the other sites mentioned, with less "hard" information than on texbirds and on the blog site, but easy reading and great photos.

**Other sites ...**

Go to alamoinnbnb.com and click the link marked blog to see a blogsite with photos and stories by Mary Beth Stowe, the Birding Pro at Alamo Inn B&B, Gear and Tours. Keith Hackland also contributes stories on birding the valley. This blog provides information on what one might see on a guided tour, as well as other information on the area.

Searching the internet and facebook with relevant terms does bring up numerous other birding sites. The largest valley birding and butterfly web site is maintained by Jan Dauphin. It was set up and filled with information by her and her late husband, David Dauphin. www.thedauphins.net

Each birding destination in the Valley has a web site with good information. Simply google the name to find their site. One that is useful is theworldbirdingcenter.com, offering links to the sites of the nine world birding centers.

Another with information about birding that may not be easily found elsewhere, is southtexasnature.org the site for South Texas Nature.

Another information source used by visiting birders is a simple white board maintained at most visitor centers of their recently seen rarities. It is usually the first stop at any visitor center for birders. We maintain a paper white board at Alamo Inn B&B of Valley wide rarities, of birds and butterflies. Get out there and enjoy our unique Valley wildlife.



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## Observations on Life

by Ben Dover

### Spotlight On Christmas

First of all, let us agree, "There is no such thing as Xmas." Christmas is not simply a holiday for kids." It is truly a celebration of probably the most significant birth in our world's history. Gift giving was first established by the three kings of Orient as the story goes. It seems, that part of Christmas has overshadowed all other facets of the season, and we have made the true celebration secondary. I hope we never allow our secular celebration to totally precede the true reason for Christmas.

Merry Christmas is the salutation that seems to be appropriate for this season of the year, and it is a wonderful wish indeed. When we offer our wish that another person might enjoy this season regardless of how they might achieve its happiness, that wish is positive. It is for certain that everyone associated with the "Spotlight" sends their most ardent hope that you will have a Christmas that is blessed with your most desired wishes.

Of course, we extend that wish through the month of December to your midnight celebration of the New Year.

#### The Message Of The Day

Christmas is the time when summer flowers have gone to bed.

You'd better wear a coat and have a hat upon your head.

Faces might glow even though there's snow upon the ground.

Nights when sights with lights are bright and all around.

When you've been good Santa should be bringing something nice.

If He can't show, Mom and Dad will certainly suffice.

Light up the tree and we'll sip cider while we say,

"Christmas bells ring out the message of the day"

Ben

*About Ben Dover: I hope readers of this paper will enjoy my offerings. I have been a writer of articles found in free press papers for about thirty years. My given name is Ben Raiche. My alias, however is Ben Dover. My writing style is primarily identified as human interest, and is intended primarily for senior citizens. If you have a short story to tell in five hundred words or less that folks might like to read, send it to me at this paper. This is no guarantee every one can be printed, but at least we can find out who you are and wish each other a nice day. My email is Benmagnolia3@gmail.com.*

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## Oleander Acres RV Resort Honors Our Veterans

by Vern Kirsch

On November 11, 2016 Oleander Acres RV resort celebrated a pot luck diner to honor and observe Veterans Day. The pot luck was nicely attended and like any pot luck, with so much good food, over indulged on. Or at least I should say I did, I can not speak for others. A few of those gathered are shown here enjoying themselves. The staff decorated the hall very colorfully, in Red, White and Blue.

While it saddens me that not all veterans attend gatherings like this, it is something I fully understand. Having been a veteran for 50 years now, I did not participate myself until recently. Therefore, if I can, in the future I would encourage all veterans to come out and enjoy the food and enjoy your Brothers and Sisters in Arms.

To understand Veterans Day we need to know a little of the history. Veterans Day was not always called that. Originally it was called Armistice Day and was supposed to be a day set aside to celebrate the end of all wars. In 1938 the following occurred:

An Act approved on May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November a legal holiday, a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated each year and known as "Armistice Day." (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a)

Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I. In 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the Nation's history and after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the



83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars. <http://www.va.gov>.

Now with this in mind let's meet some veterans who participated in the Oleander pot luck; Ron Shiner, Ray Burton, Elvis Campbell, Lany Fite, Larry Depyper, Doug Calhoun, John Watson and Vern Kirsch.

A very special thank you to Karen Kovars, the Activity Director at Oleanders, and to all who brought food to the banquet. You did a great job!



## Jeepers Having Fun!

by Alyssa Cavazos

There is a lot to be thankful for all year round and the month of November is a special time when we can do just that. There was a change in scheduling this time around making Jeep Night fall on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Jeepers gathered at Sofie's 'SS' Saloon for this very special Jeep Night, dedicated to giving back to the community. In the spirit of the season attendees were encouraged to bring canned goods for donation. To make things more interesting it was decided that the Jeep Club who made the largest donation would be receiving a "Jeep Night Food Drive" award.

The turnout was phenomenal and our Jeepers went above and beyond. Jeeps were filled to the brim with canned goods ready to be donated. Everyone did an outstanding job and should be so proud to be a part of this Jeep Community.

Texas Jeep Crawlers were the winners of the "Jeep Night Food Drive" award for the largest bounty of canned goods. Pastor Mike from LOGOS Community Church joined us that evening to give us more information on the distribution of our contributions. All canned goods will be going to a colonia in Edinburg, consisting of 85 families, 20 of which are single parent households, and 112 children. The distribution took place on November 23rd with Pastor Mike, LOGOS Community Church members, Jeepers, and the Edinburg Assistant Chief of Police in attendance.

Jeep Night powered by Burns Motors is typically held on the second Thursday of each month, unless changes are made beforehand. Next month's Jeep Night will be held December 8 at Sofie's 'SS' Saloon, located at 6801 S 10th St in McAllen, Texas. We will be holding a "Toy Drive" which will be dedicated to collecting toys for the children of the same colonia in Edinburg. An award will be given to the Jeep Club with the most bountiful contribution.

Information on Jeep Night and other events held by our Jeep Clubs can be found on our Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/RGVJeepNight](http://www.facebook.com/RGVJeepNight)

You can also get in contact with Burns Motors' Big Lew at (956) 984-4554 or via email at [biglew@burnsmotors.com](mailto:biglew@burnsmotors.com)

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## 10 REASONS YOU SHOULD RING THE BELL

1. **It's fun!** This is a great way to celebrate the holiday season. You get to be right in the midst of the holiday bustle. Get creative – dress up, sing songs, bring your friends!

2. **You'll spread Christmas cheer.** The Red Kettle bell is an iconic sound of the season. You'll put people in the Christmas spirit! If you're up for it, you can even use the time to check caroling off your list of festivities.

3. **You'll be part of changing lives.** The Salvation Army of McAllen provides food, clothing, shelter and other social services to those in need. Last year The Salvation Army served more than 75,055 hot meals; assisted over 16,042 Hidalgo County residents with social service; provided 13,299 unduplicated nights of lodging through our Emergency Shelter; gifted 2,092 children with toys through our Angel Tree Program; and cooked 107,896 bowls of soup for refugees.

4. **The money you raise directly impacts your community.**

All donations made in Hidalgo County stay in Hidalgo County. By helping raise funds through a Red Kettle, you're a neighbor helping neighbors. Encourage "Red Kettle Days" for your business, civic organization, church or neighborhood and make a difference in the lives of real people in our community!

5. **It's easy!** No experience required. With as little as four hours of your time and the wonderful support from participating stores, you can be part of our Salvation Army Bell Ringing Team!

6. **It's the perfect opportunity to wear a tacky Christmas sweater.** After hanging in your closet all year, it's time for the annual debut. Dressing up makes bell ringing more fun, and might get some extra smiles out of Christmas shoppers.

7. **"Make new friends, and keep the old."** You'll get to meet lots of new people as you invite them to donate to your red kettle. Add to the fun by asking friends and family to ring a bell with you. You can even make it a new tradition!

8. **Channel your competitive side.** For you goal-oriented types, it's easy to see how your work is paying off as your Red Kettle fills up! See how many people you can convince to give to your Red Kettle.



9. **Take advantage of the cool winter air!** It doesn't stick around for long. Dust off those winter coats and sip on some cider or hot cocoa.

10. **Be part of a legacy.** The Salvation Army Red Kettle campaign has been a Christmas tradition since 1891. Salvation Army Captain Joseph McFee set out a kettle to raise funds to feed the hungry in San Francisco. Now Red Kettles can be found all over the world in places like Japan, Chile and countries in Europe.

**Sign up Today to be a Bell Ringer!**

If you are interested in volunteering as a bell ringer please call us at 956.682.1468

or email [eloise.montemayor@uss.salvationarmy.org](mailto:eloise.montemayor@uss.salvationarmy.org)



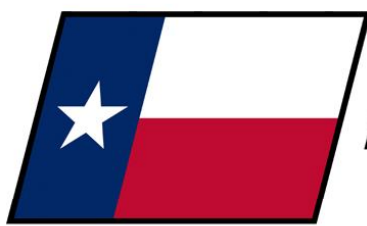
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more than we do,  
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we know what  
is God's plan.

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and know,  
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## GE Aviation Kicks Off Their 2016 United Way Campaign

GE Aviation, McAllen, TX kicked-off their 2016 United Way Campaign with a pancake breakfast for 42 of their Pillar Club Members.

GE Aviation is a Top 10 Company Supporter of United Way of South Texas, with contributions that exceed \$55,000. The company also makes a 50% corporate match towards employee contributions.

Horacio Repetto, Plant Manager, Shane Costello, Quality Manager and Terri Leichtnam, HR Site Manager are instrumental in ensuring that GE Employees learn about United Way funded programs, which are available to their families and the community at no cost.

GE employees are engaged in community service throughout the year. Their leadership staff and employees are committed to "giving back" and expressing their support of United Way. They understand that their contributions and volunteer time impacts the lives of hundreds of thousands of local residents in Hidalgo & Starr Counties.

GE employees volunteer in United Way's Day of Caring and Back to School Shopping Spree. These two programs collectively impact 3,450 local Middle School and High School students every year.



Pictured from L to R: Horacio Repetto, GE Plant Manager, Shane Costello, Terri Leichtnam Campaign Coordinators, joined other GE Aviation contributors at their Annual United Way of South Texas Campaign Kick-off.

School attire, personal hygiene items, school supplies and other services are offered to the students who are pre-selected by counselors at each school district.

The Board of Directors thanks GE Aviation employees and all companies, school districts, federal and state agencies, small businesses and individuals who make the choice to support their community through the United Way.

Their contributions impact Education, Health and Financial Stability programs that are available to our neighbors today! United Way programs offer shelter to victims of domestic

violence and the homeless, forensic interviews for victims of assault, after school programs for youth, transportation to medical appointments, drug and alcohol counseling, disaster relief services, free income tax preparation services, assistance to elderly citizens who have been abused, food for students and the elderly and much more.

To learn more about United Way programs, volunteering and how to begin a Campaign at your business today, call 956-686-6331 or visit us at [www.unitedwayofsotx.org](http://www.unitedwayofsotx.org).

## Advent Season

Advent, from the Latin word adventus meaning arrival, is the 4-week period prior to Christmas.

It is a time to ponder the great sacrifice that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, made for us by coming to earth as an infant. He lived a perfect life, died a sacrificial death, and rose from the dead for us.

He saved us from our sins and eternal damnation because of his great love, and adopts each person individually into his family through baptism and faith in him.

## The Preacher and the Taxi Driver

A preacher dies, and when he gets to Heaven, he sees a New York cab driver who has more stars in his crown.

He says to an angel, "I don't get it. I devoted my whole life to my congregation. Why did the taxi driver get more stars than me?"

The angel says, "We reward results. Did your congregation always pay attention when you gave a sermon?"

The preacher says, "Once in a while someone fell asleep."

The angel says, "Right. Well, when people rode in this guy's taxi, they not only stayed awake, but they usually prayed!"

# Bible Alive Theater Comes to the Valley

In a ministry partnership with Bibleville Conference Center, Bible Alive Theater will present their second, **FREE**, full-cast Bible musical in the Rio Grande Valley on **Saturday Dec. 17, 2016 at 2pm and 7pm** at the Bibleville main auditorium, 1346 N. Cesar Chavez Rd. in Alamo, TX!

Many of the cast and crew are from Bibleville, while others including our younger actors are from here in the valley. This is a cross-denominational effort with adults and youth from many different churches and denominations. This original Christmas musical 'The Heavens Declare His Glory' was written by President and Co-Founder Myra Green who started the first Bible Alive Theater in Santa Fe, NM in 2008, where they are now in their 8th season.

The musical tells the traditional Christmas story from the viewpoint of the Magi who studied the Hebrew prophets, recognize the signs in the heavens and follow a star to the little king born the Savior of the World. Meet the evil king Herod and his devious wife who plot the destruction of the Messiah, and sing with the angels who witness every event as it unfolds! It has many of our favorite Christmas carols in it too. It is the purpose of Bible Alive Theater to present the stories from the Bible as musical theater, adding the element of sight and sound to the Word of God. They want to encourage Christian artists, technicians and performers to use their God-given talents to worship and honor the God of the Bible. The name says it all, the Bible put to music and presented through drama.

Since 2001 Clif and Myra Green have traveled throughout the United States using drama and music to present faithful accounts of testimonies from the Bible. Myra has 6 original solo musicals and several Gospel concerts, which have been presented in many of the valley RV resort parks over the past 11 years. She has several scheduled this season as well, and room on her calendar for more. Many original, full cast musicals have been presented in Santa Fe, NM (4 each year) and over 200 volunteers have participated in these Bible musicals. Many have been written by student members that Myra taught and trained. Currently there are 21 different musicals that have been performed in four full cast locations: Santa Fe, NM; Farmington, NM; Otsego, MI; and here in Alamo, TX.



People have come to know Jesus through these Bible musicals and many Christians have become motivated to study the Bible more intensely, so they may know Jesus better. Members are being plugged into Bible Alive Theater and are being trained to proclaim the good news of the Bible through theater ministry.

Their website is [BibleAliveTheater.com](http://BibleAliveTheater.com) or you can call Myra Green, President Bible Alive Theater 505-690-2548 ... 848 Palm, Alamo, TX 78516

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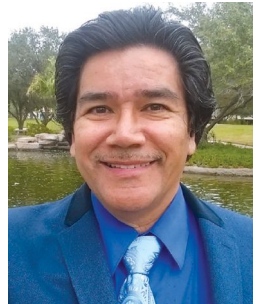


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## GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT GROWING OLD

- 1 ... Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional.
- 2 ... Forget the health food. I need all the preservatives I can get.
- 3 ... When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do while you're down there.
- 4 ... You get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.
- 5 ... It's frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody bothers to ask you the questions.
- 6 ... Time may be a great healer, but it's a lousy beautician.
- 7 ... Wisdom comes with age, but sometimes age comes alone.

# For Kids Only

No matter how old you are!

Have Fun and Learn  
while you solve these puzzles and  
practice your coloring skills



Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head,  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,  
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay  
Close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,  
And fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

**HAPPY  
Birthday  
Jesus**

Find these words associated  
with the birth of Jesus.

- Angels
- Bethlehem
- Birthday
- Christmas
- Emanuel
- Hallelujah
- Jesus
- Joseph
- Manger
- Mary
- Music
- Prophecy
- Shepherds
- Star

E	H	X	Z	S	L	C	B	X	J	S	M	E	U
Y	A	M	F	D	J	U	E	L	E	C	E	F	T
A	J	A	N	H	O	F	A	D	S	R	H	S	M
D	U	R	L	D	S	N	J	C	U	J	E	N	Z
H	L	Y	R	Q	E	A	S	T	S	G	L	J	U
T	E	X	Z	S	P	N	D	X	V	L	H	R	O
R	L	Y	P	A	H	G	R	F	O	O	T	E	P
I	L	D	F	M	V	E	E	B	X	E	E	G	R
B	A	H	W	T	N	L	H	C	S	M	B	N	O
F	H	T	X	S	I	S	P	I	T	A	W	A	P
C	I	K	C	I	T	V	E	S	A	N	J	M	H
S	N	A	A	R	S	K	H	U	R	U	A	R	E
Y	D	O	D	H	R	D	S	M	K	E	B	A	C
B	S	L	G	C	O	J	C	C	Y	L	S	M	Y

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“It is not what I like, it is what “Sully” the border collie likes. He gets the best of care ...”  
“Our dogs always love staying at Paws and Claws ... we appreciate all you do to make them feel so comfortable!”

## PAWS For Vets

### Grant For Veterans Helps Match Companion Animals With Those Who Served Our Country

By Amanda A. Taylor

In honor of Rio Grande Valley veterans, The Laurie P. Andrews PAWS Center has utilized a Veterans with Disabilities Grant from a private donor which enables veterans with at least a 10 percent disability to adopt any of the pets available at the center for free.

Adoption fees are typically \$100 for cats, \$120 for kittens, \$150 for dogs and \$170 for puppies. All fees, which are completely waived for veterans, includes spay or neuter operation, microchip for identification, first series of vaccinations and a month of free pet accident insurance.



U.S. Army veteran Joel Garza with newly adopted Whiskey on Nov. 10, at The Laurie P. Andrews PAWS Center in Edinburg.

Joel Garza, a United States Army veteran, said he heard about the grant from a friend who knew he had just lost his dog.

“A friend of mine called me because he knew my dog had just died,” the 67-year-old said. “I had been looking for an Australian shepherd mix for a while and when I went in to PAWS, a staff member told me she had the perfect dog for me.” Jacklyn Philippus, Adoption Specialist, led Garza to Whiskey, a 2-year-old Catahoula/shepherd mix. “I really liked the dog when I saw him,” Garza said. “We have sheep at the house and I wanted a smaller dog, so I knew he was perfect.”

After filling out paperwork and showing proof of disability from the Department of Veterans Affairs, Whiskey went home with his new family on Nov. 10, just in time for Veterans Day. Garza said he was drafted in to the U.S. Army in 1967, immediately after graduating from high school.

“It was just part of life back then,” he said on being drafted, “all my buddies were getting drafted and I didn’t want my friends to get out before I did, so I went in and made sure I was drafted too. I wanted us all to come home around the same time, but some of us didn’t make it back.”

Garza said programs like these are important for veterans because they are at a higher risk of developing emotional disorders such as depression and anxiety.

“Things like this are good for vets because some veterans get very lonely and if you have a dog, you can talk to it and hang out with it and it will make your day happier,” the San Juan native said. “I’m lucky to live with my wife, but there are some veterans that don’t have anyone. I walk with Whiskey and turn him loose in the yard so he can run around, but he always comes back to me when I call him.”



Joel Garza with Whiskey at his new home on Nov. 15

A member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Garza is considered legally blind with only 15 percent of his vision left. Although he is unable to drive, Garza says he knows his property well enough to do work around his land.

“I’ve always wanted a dog to bond with and sit with me,” Garza said. “I’ve had other dogs before that wouldn’t listen to me but Whiskey already responds to me. In the mornings when he sees me he starts barking because he wants me to let him out of his kennel. I think Whiskey and I are going to do great.”

Whiskey was just one of the many adoptable dogs available at The Laurie P. Andrews PAWS Center, a no-kill animal adoption and education facility in Edinburg.

For more information on the Veterans with Disabilities Grant or information on how to adopt, call (956) 720-4563 or visit pvaonline.com. Email me at amanda@pvaonline.com

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JANUARY 12-14



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